

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**  
**JOINT STAFF REPORT: SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 2**  
**Columbia River Joint State Hearing**  
**April 12, 2012**

<b><i>Fisheries under Consideration:</i></b>	Recreational salmon downstream of Bonneville Dam
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*Water Conditions*

- The Willamette River crested at 16.2 feet on April 2, dropped to 9.1 feet on April 11, but is projected to rise to 10.9 feet by Saturday April 14. Visibility measured at Willamette Falls was 2.6 feet this morning.
- The Columbia River crested at 16.0 feet (Vancouver) and dropped to 9.5 feet by April 11 and is projected to rise to 11.0 feet by Friday April 13. Discharge at Bonneville Dam is currently at 316 kcfs (115 kcfs of which is spill) compared to a 5-year average of 214 kcfs for this date. Discharge at Bonneville Dam is projected to be near 320 kcfs through the month of April. Discharge in 2011 ranged from 303 kcfs on April 13 to 232 kcfs on April 30. Water temperature is currently 46°F compared a 5-year average of 47°F for this date. So far, monthly (Jan-Apr) average water temperatures have been colder than both the 5 and 10-year averages.

*Stock Status*

- Bonneville Dam passage of Chinook through April 11 totals 138 adults. Passage at Bonneville averages 4% complete by this date based on the 10-year average, but has been late-timed for six of the past ten years. The average 50% passage date is May 6, ranging from April 24 to May 12 over the past ten years. It is still too early in the run to make any conclusions regarding run size; however, passage to date is less than expected.

*Lower Columbia River Recreational Fishery*

- The Chinook retention season on the Columbia River downstream of Bonneville Dam was extended beyond the scheduled closure date of April 7. A total of six retention days were added to the season, which is currently scheduled to close effective Saturday April 14.

- Through March, angler effort was 69% of expectations, while catch rates were much lower. Effort and catch rates during the first week of April were minimal due to poor weather and water conditions. River conditions have only recently started to improve.
- Preliminary recreational catch estimates of spring Chinook (all stocks) downstream of Bonneville Dam through March 31 total 2,024 fish (1,671 kept).

Preliminary Summary of the LCR Recreational Fishery.			
	Angler Trips	Total Kept Catch	UR Catch (kept + rel mort)
Feb	8,188	37	20
Mar	41,983	1,634	1,072
Apr 1- 8	11,589	656	453
Apr 9-13 (proj.)	5,200	510	363
Total	66,960	2,837	1,908

- Estimated catch for April 1-8 is 787 fish (656 kept). An additional catch of 600 fish (510 kept) is projected for April 9-13.
- Of the total projected catch (kept and released) through April 13 (3,411 fish), about 2,251 are estimated to be upriver stock. The kept and release mortality for upriver fish is estimated at 1,908 fish, or 15% of the 12,700 available for the recreational fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam prior to a run update.
- Generally angler effort and success improves through the month of April, however, based on current projections, fishing conditions in the lower Columbia River are expected to vary in the short term which could moderate success.
- Given the remaining balance of upriver fish, additional recreational fishing opportunity in the lower river is possible given pre-season guidelines. Unfortunately, predicting catches for extended periods is challenging. Therefore, staff is proposing an additional one-week season extension, which poses little risk and avoids extending seasons beyond staff's ability to project catches.

<b>2012 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery - Staff Recommendation</b>	
<b>Downstream of Bonneville Dam</b>	
<b>Season:</b>	Extend the ongoing fishery from Saturday April 14 through Friday April 20, 2012, except closed Tuesday April 17 (6 days)
<b>Area:</b>	Buoy 10 upstream to Beacon Rock (boat and bank) plus bank angling only from Beacon Rock upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline. Legal upstream boundary defined as: "A deadline marker on the Oregon bank (approximately four miles downstream from Bonneville Dam Powerhouse 1) in a straight line through the western tip of Pierce Island to a deadline marker on the Washington bank at Beacon Rock."
<b>Daily Bag limit:</b>	Two adult salmonids per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept. All other permanent regulations apply.
<b>Additional regulations:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective through June 15, 2012 for the mainstem Columbia River salmon and steelhead fishery from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line upstream to OR/WA border, it is unlawful when fishing from vessels which are less than 30 feet in length (substantiated by Coast Guard documentation or Marine Board registration) to totally remove from the water any salmon or steelhead required to be released.</li> <li>• In Washington, on the mainstem Columbia River below Bonneville Dam, anglers may not possess in the field fish mutilated so that size, species or fin clip cannot be determined until the angler has reached their automobile or principle means of land transportation and has completed their daily angling.</li> <li>• Effective through May 15, 2012, the mainstem Columbia River will be open for retention of adipose fin-clipped steelhead and shad <b>ONLY</b> during days and seasons open for retention of adipose fin-clipped spring Chinook.</li> <li>• Effective through June 15, 2012, on days when the mainstem Columbia River recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam is open to retention of Chinook, the salmonid daily bag limit in Oregon and Washington Select Areas will be the same as mainstem Columbia River bag limits. On days when the mainstem Columbia River fishery is <u>closed</u> to Chinook retention, permanent salmonid bag limit regulations apply.</li> </ul>	

- The proposed extension would continue the ongoing fishery, and provide six additional days of opportunity. Staff would recommend a hearing on Thursday April 19, to review recreational catch and stock status. This step-wise approach to season extensions is conservative and allows for more accurate projections of future fisheries.
- The catch estimate for the proposed fishery is 2,000 Chinook (1,700 kept), including 1,298 upriver mortalities. Through April 20, the projected upriver mortalities would total 3,206 fish, or 25% of the 12,700 available for the recreational fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam prior to a run update. The corresponding upriver impact rate would be 0.119%, or 18% of the 0.660% pre-update impact rate allowed for the mainstem recreational fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam.

<b>Preliminary Summary of 2012 Non-Indian Upriver Chinook Catch</b>				
Fishery	UR Catch (kept + rel mort)	% of Allowable CB	Upriver Impact %	% of Allowable Impact
L. Col. R. Sport (Feb)	20	0.16%	0.001%	0.15%
L. Col. R. Sport (Mar)	1,072	8.46%	0.040%	6.10%
L. Col. R. Sport (April 1-8)	453	3.58%	0.017%	2.58%
<i>L. Col R. Sport (April 9- 13, proj.)</i>	363	2.87%	0.013%	2.03%
<i>L. Col R. Sport (April 14-20 proposed)</i>	1,298	10.25%	0.048%	7.23%
<b>L. Col. R. Sport Cum Total</b>	<b>3,206</b>	<b>25.31%</b>	<b>0.119%</b>	<b>18.09%</b>
Mainstem Commercial (April 3)	1,598	27.02%	0.086%	19.31%
<i>Mainstem Commercial (April 10, prelim.)</i>	2,678	45.28%	0.149%	33.46%
<b>Mainstem Commercial Cum Total</b>	<b>4,276</b>	<b>72.30%</b>	<b>0.234%</b>	<b>52.77%</b>
Select Area Commercial and Above Bonneville Sport (pre-update allowed)	3,414	100%	0.370%	100%
<b>Actual and Projected Season Totals</b>	<b>10,896</b>	<b>49.54%</b>	<b>0.723%</b>	<b>49.05%</b>
Allowable Pre-Update	21,994		1.474%	
Remaining	11,098		0.751%	

- A final upriver run size of 131,000 is required to remain within catch balance and impact limitations for the completed mainstem commercial and recreational (including proposed extension) fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam and pre-update allocations for Select Area commercial and above Bonneville recreational fisheries.

### **Future Meetings**

- Staff is recommending a Compact hearing be scheduled for 1 PM Monday April 16.
- Staff is recommending a Joint State hearing be scheduled for 1 PM Thursday April 19.